

**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES
NEWS RELEASE**



*Cora Campbell, Commissioner
Jeff Regnart, Director*



Contact:
Maria Wessel, Groundfish Management Biologist

Phone: (907) 424-3212
Fax: (907) 424-3235

Cordova Office
P.O. Box 669
Cordova, AK. 99574
Date Issued: 2/8/2012

**FISHERY ANNOUNCEMENT
PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND AREA-E
PARALLEL PACIFIC COD FISHERY SEASON CLOSING TO POT GEAR
STATE-WATERS PACIFIC COD FISHERY SEASON OPENING TO POT GEAR
EMERGENCY ORDER # 2-GF-E-03-12**

The Prince William Sound (PWS) Area E parallel Pacific cod season will close to pot gear effective 12:00 noon February 10, 2012. This coincides with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) closure of the Pacific cod pot gear sector in the federal Central Gulf of Alaska (CGOA) area.

The PWS parallel Pacific cod seasons for jig and longline gear will remain open and their closures will coincide with the federal closures for jig and the less than 50 foot hook and line (<50' HAL) gear groups in the CGOA respectively. **A vessel may not simultaneously participate in a state-waters season and any other concurrent Pacific cod season.**

Consistent with new regulations adopted by the Alaska Board of Fisheries the PWS **state-waters Pacific cod season will open to pot gear at 12:00 noon, February 11, 2012**, and will close when 90 percent of the guideline harvest level is reached. The fishery guideline harvest level (GHL) for the PWS Area is 1.45 million pounds.

For the state-waters Pacific cod season, area registration is exclusive; gear is limited to 60 pots and each pot must display a buoy identification tag. **Buoy tags and vessel registrations may be obtained from department offices in Homer and Cordova or from Department of Public Safety in Seward.**

-continued-

Fishermen are reminded that there is a 24-hour delivery time requirement following closure of a groundfish fishery. Groundfish pot storage for PWS (5 AAC 28.232) requires all groundfish pots be removed from the water following closure of a parallel fishery, unless the vessel is registered for the state waters season. The following provisions apply:

- ◆ Pots may be stored in waters less than 25 fathoms deep only on the north side of Montague Island between 147° 25.00' W. long and 147° 35.00' W. long. 10 days before the scheduled opening of the state waters season until 10 days following the closure of that fishery.
- ◆ Buoy tags are in place, all bait and bait containers are removed, and all doors are secured open.

Fishing Area: Pacific cod may be taken in waters of the PWS Area (5 AAC 28.205) except for those waters of the Eastern Section of the Outside District east of 146° 15.12' W. long. (the latitude of Hook Point (5 AAC 28.267.(e),(1))).

Pot fishing closure areas: The provisions of Closed Waters in Prince William Sound Area (5AAC 28.250) were amended in 2009 to permit use of pot gear in waters of Orca Bay east of 146° 37.50' W. long., with the exception of Port Gravina waters north of a line from Gravina Point light (60° 37.37' N. lat., 146° 61.22' W. long.) to Red Head (60° 40.25' N. lat., 146° 30.22' W. long.) which remain closed. Consult the current regulation booklet and attached map prior to fishing.

Directed fishing for all groundfish species is closed in waters within 3 nautical miles of two Steller sea lion rookeries within PWS (Figure 1). For specific regulatory language contact NMFS in Kodiak at (907) 481-1780 or <http://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/reg/679b22.pdf>. Waters closed to fishing with groundfish pot gear (5 AAC 28.250) are shown in Figure 1.

Pacific cod may be retained at a 20% bycatch allowance to other directed fisheries for vessels using longline, pot or mechanical jig gear. This amount is in addition to the 20% aggregate bycatch allowance for all other retained species specified in 5 AAC 28.070. However, the landed weight of Pacific cod retained as bycatch may not exceed 20 percent of the directed finfish species on board the vessel.

Lingcod may not be retained prior to the opening of the directed fishery on July 1, 2011.

-continued-

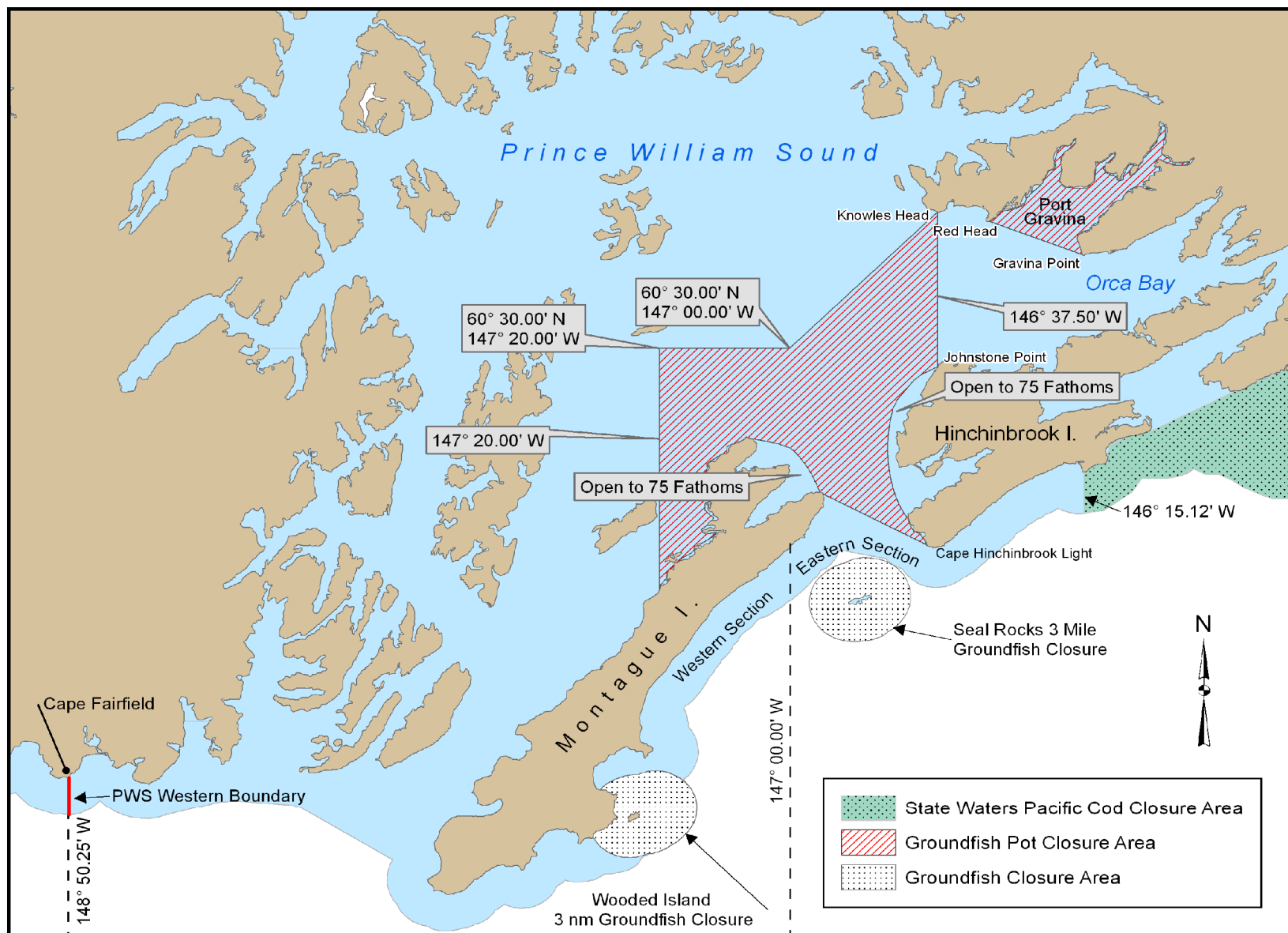


Figure 1. Prince William Sound closures to groundfish pot gear, groundfish fishing, and to the state waters Pacific cod season.

-end-